



**The National
Association of
Laryngectomee
Clubs**



Laryngectomy

means the removal of the larynx or voice box. A laryngectomee is a person who has had this essential and life saving operation which will bring change and a challenge – a challenge which thousands of people have met successfully.

The first change facing the laryngectomee is the need to adapt to a new breathing mechanism – breathing through a hole in the neck (stoma) and not through the mouth and nose as before. The second important change is the fact that the laryngectomee will no longer have a normal voice. The laryngectomee retains every aspect of speech except that of making voice.

Laryngectomee clubs have been set up throughout the British Isles and Eire, in association with hospitals and speech therapy clinics. The membership of the clubs consists of patients who, in the company of relatives, friends and interested professional people, meet to give and receive encouragement. The success of these clubs has been proved repeatedly by the many examples of voice rehabilitation and courage

gained through the friendships formed in the relaxed and congenial atmosphere.

The formation of a National Association of Laryngectomee Clubs arose out of a meeting on 12 May 1975, at Charing Cross Hospital, London, where a number of laryngectomee patients from three London clubs met together, with the knowledge and support of clubs in Birmingham, Bristol and Nottingham. The proposed Association would be responsible for looking after the interests of all laryngectomee patients. A preliminary National Executive Committee was formed which held further meetings with laryngectomised patients and professional people. On 9 September 1975, a Steering Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of the late John C. McCarthy, CBE.

On 30 September 1976 the National Association of Laryngectomee Clubs was inaugurated for the purpose of promoting the rehabilitation of laryngectomees; uniting all clubs within the British Isles whose objects are to promote the welfare of laryngectomees, encouraging the formation of new clubs with similar objectives and collecting, co-ordinating and disseminating all information relevant to the rehabilitation of the laryngectomee.

Since its inauguration the National Association has prospered. Members of the Executive Committee, when invited by surgeons, nursing staff or speech therapists, now visit local hospitals and speech therapy training establishments, to lecture and to talk to patients both before and after their operation showing what can be achieved.

The Association endeavours to publicise, by all means, the problems of the laryngectomee and to encourage understanding by the general public.

Links have been established with national associations in various countries. This enables the National Association of Laryngectomee Clubs to collect and exchange information and keep abreast of developments on a world wide basis.

The National Association of Laryngectomee Clubs is a registered Charity No. 273635 and relies on the generous financial help of the Macmillan Cancer Support, affiliation fees from clubs, and public donations, for the funds necessary to pursue its objectives.

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